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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

1 March 1951

SUBJECT: NIE-29: YUGOSLAVIA
(As agreed to by IAC representatives)

THE PROBLEM

To assess the capabilities and intentions of the USSR and its European Satellites with respect to action against Yugoslavia during 1951.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The Kremlin aims eventually to eliminate the Tito Government, to replace it by a regime subservient to the USSR, and to integrate Yugoslavia politically, economically, and strategically into the European Satellite structure. However, the USSR in its treatment of the Tito problem has neither implicitly nor explicitly suggested that it intends to bring about the overthrow of the Tito regime at any cost or within any time period.

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2. It is unlikely that the Tito regime could be overthrown during 1951 by a Soviet-inspired coup or by internal revolt. Therefore, Satellite or Soviet-Satellite invasion would be necessary to achieve this end in 1951.

3. The continuing military build-up in the neighboring Satellite states (increase in armed forces, stockpiling, re-equipment, gasoline conservation, stepping-up of war industry, etc.) has reversed the previous balance of military strength between them and Yugoslavia and has created a Satellite capability to attack Yugoslavia with little or no warning.

4. Yugoslavia could not successfully defend itself against a sustained attack by the four neighboring Satellite powers (Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary, and Albania), conducted under unified command and with full logistical support from the USSR. Guerrilla-type resistance, however, would continue after the collapse of formal military resistance.

5. Joint Soviet-Satellite forces could successfully invade Yugoslavia, overcome formal military resistance and eventually render guerrilla operations ineffective.

6. Yugoslav capabilities and morale are such that substantial Western assistance in military material would probably

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enable Yugoslavia to defend itself successfully against a Satellite attack, and even extend the period of resistance to a full-scale Soviet-Satellite attack. However, such material would have to be adapted to the special requirements of Yugoslav forces, and to be effective in the initial stages of an invasion would have to be delivered well in advance of hostilities and would have to be on a continuing basis.

7. The Kremlin might estimate that the conquest of Yugoslavia could be accomplished ^{in 1951} with less risk of general war than at any later date.

8. If the USSR decides to launch an attack on Yugoslavia in 1951, we believe that the attack probably will be made by Satellite forces with "unofficial" Soviet assistance as required.

9. Indications are not conclusive as to whether or not an attack on Yugoslavia will be launched in 1951. The scope of continuing Satellite military preparations indicates that the ground work is being laid for a possible Satellite attack against Yugoslavia. The military build-up of the Satellites has not been confined to the Satellites adjacent to Yugoslavia. In the case of Bulgaria and Albania, the military preparations

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by themselves could indicate preparations for a future attack against Greece and Turkey as well as Yugoslavia. Since July 1950 Cominform propaganda has consistently advanced arguments that would justify an attack on Yugoslavia. There has recently been no development in this propaganda that would indicate an attack at an early date.

10. There is no conclusive evidence that the USSR has reached a decision to launch an attack on Yugoslavia in 1951. Although the USSR would probably not make such a decision unless it were prepared to accept general war, there is a possibility that it may estimate that such an attack could be successfully carried through without provoking general war. In any event, we believe a Satellite attack on Yugoslavia in 1951 must be considered a real possibility.